

Work Environment and Team Cohesiveness of Hotels in Rivers State

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Abstract: *This study examined the relationship between work environment and team cohesiveness of hotels in River State, Nigeria. A cross sectional survey design was adopted and 587 employees of 25 hotels in River State were covered as the population of the study. A sample of 234 respondents was derived from the population and the simple random sampling technique was used. Data were collected using copies of the questionnaire. The bivariate hypotheses were tested using Spearman's Rank Order Correlation. The outcome of the analysis depicts a significant and positive relationship between the dimensions of the work environment (supervisors' support and physical work condition) with the measures of team cohesiveness (task cohesion and social cohesion). It was concluded that the work environment significantly relates to team cohesiveness. The study among others recommended that the hotels in Rivers State should promote a good working environment for effective team cohesiveness.*

Keywords: *Work Environment, Supervisors' Support, Physical Work Condition, Team Cohesiveness, Task Cohesion, Social Cohesion*

Introduction

Teams are crucial for business success in today's modern economy and play a significant role in the majority of firms (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). Teamwork can produce results that the same number of people working alone couldn't, whether they operate in an office environment (Simons & Peterson, 2000) or one that is remote, limited, or harsh (Bishop, 2004). Team members seek to contribute the group's capacity to operate well together, which is described as the group's capacity to work successfully throughout towards a common goal (Herrity, 2023). Team cohesion must be nurtured because it is not something that most people are naturally good at. Teams can improve morale and give support to overworked or underqualified team members (Salas, Sims, & Burke, 2005). Effective team management enhances competitive challenges.

Examining a company's work environment, which is the collection of situational elements that makes up the corporate milieu, is crucial when choosing a position or attempting to maintain good operations. While a bad work environment might demotivate you, a good one can enhance morale. Understanding workplace traits can help determine a healthy environment and strengthen team collaboration (Herrity, 2023). People want to invest in things that matter, have a functional reliable organisation that is effective and successful, establish a trustworthy firm, and produce something they care about in order to withstand the sacrifice, risk, and adventure that dedication needs. This necessitates a work atmosphere that promotes efficient teamwork, strong team relationships, and effective team building.

The key to successful collaboration is for teams to be cohesive and effective. A successful work environment entails a cohesive and productive team. To be cohesive, all team members must participate equally in team activities, there must be good communication among team members, they should freely share and exchange ideas, conflict must be effectively resolved within the team, interpersonal ties amongst individuals in the team must be good, and obstacles must be overcome and fixed as a team (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006).. These teams can only be effective in carrying out daily activities if they have a high level of cohesion. To improve team performance, it is necessary to ensure that teams are extremely cohesive.

Teams are the fundamental framework of how projects, activities, and tasks are organised and handled in businesses throughout the world. Global organisations seeking a competitive advantage are increasingly deploying complicated business strategies through the usage of high-performance teams. Teamwork offers numerous advantages, including the range of information, ideas, and tools given by team members, cohesiveness, and highly cohesive teams are more cooperative and effective in attaining stated goals (Salas, et al., 2005). Superfluous stress, tension among co-workers, and a lack of cohesion within a team working environment is bound to damage team performance and workplace cohesion may, in the long run, indicate the rise or fall of a company's performance.

Organisations all over the world are transitioning from individual jobs in functionalized structures to teams embedded in ever-more complex workflow systems as the influence of teams of people working together for a common goal affects all lives (Mathieu, Marks, & Zaccaro, 2001). Mack (2023) asserts that a company's culture and objective can only be fully consolidated when every employee is on board and works to make that vision a reality while also fostering a happy work environment. The lack of empirical research on the work environment and team cohesiveness of hotels in Rivers State is what motivates this study, despite the fact that there has been a lot of descriptive research on work environment and team cohesiveness (Hoegl & Parboteeah, 2007; Bishop, 2004,). The apparent gap in the literature will be filled by this study.

Statement of the Problem

Teams require leaders who can steer them, provide them with information, and consistently promote collaboration if they are to create a productive workplace with cohesive teams. Despite the fact that collaboration is frequently highly appreciated in workplaces across industries, it can be difficult to build a cohesive team atmosphere where professionals can successfully collaborate. Ineffective leadership, unclear goals, a lack of trust, a communication gap, unequal decision-making, poor conflict resolution skills, accountability, improper workflow management, physical separation as a result of advanced technology, a lack of incentives, and poor collaboration among large teams are issues that the majority of hotels are currently dealing with (Indeed Editorial Team, 2023).

Lack of precision, personality conflicts, suppression of information, low engagement, internal competition among co-workers, philosophical differences, disparate goals, habitual clashes, lack of self-awareness, working in remoteness, and skills overlap are some of the hindrances to team cohesiveness observed (Birt, 2023). With so much unpredictability in the job, regulating the team's

moods without allowing angry outbursts to hamper effectiveness is a problem for a successful work environment and team cohesiveness.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study investigates the association between the work environment and team cohesiveness of the hotels in Rivers State. Specifically, it determines the relationship between:

1. Supervisor support and task cohesion of the hotels in Rivers State.
2. Supervisor support and Social cohesion of the hotels in Rivers State.
3. Physical work conditions and task cohesion of the hotels in Rivers State.
4. Physical work conditions and Social cohesion of the hotels in Rivers State.

Research Questions

1. How does supervisor support relate to task cohesion of the hotels in Rivers State?
2. What is the bond between supervisor support and social cohesion of the hotels in rivers state?
3. How does physical work condition relate to task cohesion of the hotels in rivers state?
4. What is the association between physical work conditions and social cohesion of the hotels in Rivers State?

Research Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between supervisor support and task cohesion of the hotels in Rivers State.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between supervisor support and Social cohesion of the hotels in Rivers State.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between physical work conditions and task cohesion of the hotels in Rivers State.

Ho₄: There is no significant relationship between physical work conditions and Social cohesion of the hotels in Rivers State.

Review of Related Literature

The study was anchored on Social identity theory which was Henri Tajfel's most significant contribution to psychology. According to this theory, the notion of who a person is with regard to their team membership(s) is referred to as social identity. Tajfel (1979) claimed that the groups to which people belonged (e.g., social class, family, football team, etc.) were an essential means of pride and self-worth. Teams provide an impression of societal identity: a sensation that we belong in the social environment.

Conceptual Framework

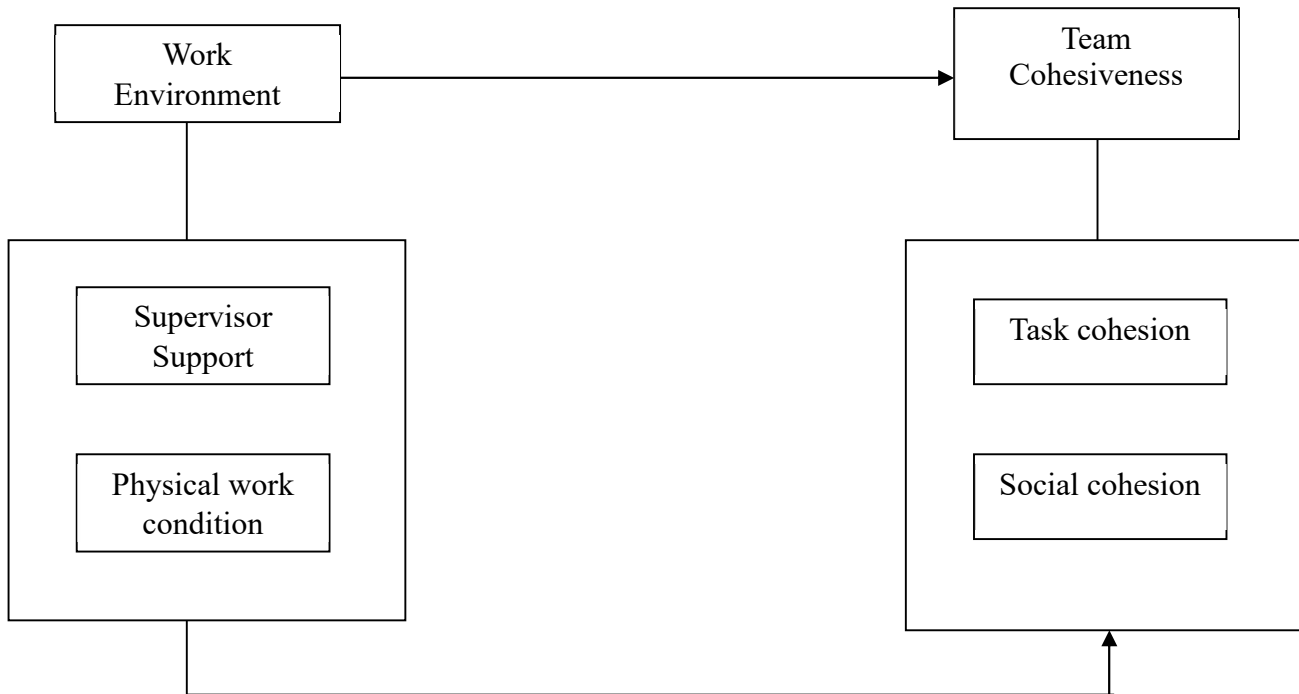


Figure 1: A framework showing the link between work environment and team cohesiveness

Source: Adapted from Malik, Ahmad, Gomez and Ali (2011); and the measures were adopted from Salas, Grossman, Hughes and Coultas (2015).

Concept of Work Environment

The term "work environment" refers to the set of components that compose the context in which employees' function and have an effect on employees. This implies that some aspects are straightforward while others are subtler (Glassdoor Team, 2021), but workers are typically required to adjust to this workplace feature. Both full-time and part-time employees are profoundly influenced by their workplace environment, and workers are equally needed to adapt to this job environment for team cohesiveness. The work atmosphere of a company either encourages or destroys its success. It determines how successfully employees perform and how well their supervisory team handles them. Every individual desire something different in a professional setting, thus the settings that allow certain employees to thrive can suffocate others (Ariella, 2022). a favourable working environment recognises employees' contributions through employment perks and possibilities for advancement, encourages employee participation in company operations, encourages staff contribution in decision-making, specifically via peer interviewing, rewards productive employees, supports workers' individuality, promotes individual working styles, and encourages communication among employees. It should value mutual feedback between managers and subordinates, hold individuals accountable for their work, supports teams by encouraging collaboration among staff members, fosters a setting where employees can learn

from their mistakes, identifies and corrects negative corporate practises that diminish organisational performance, and promotes a positive work-life balance for every worker.

Supervisor Support

According to Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), supervisor support refers to a supervisor's actions that help their staff demonstrate their abilities, knowledge, and attitudes. According to Bhatti et al. (2013), supervisors are essential to the success of training. Every company needs supervisors because they are in charge of managing staff and making sure that their work advances the organization's goals. People may be inspired and encouraged to advance in their careers by a good employer.

Supervisors can help employees by listening, motivating, and inspiring them, communicating effectively, providing feedback, focusing on employee development, being accessible to employees, recognising strengths and weaknesses, and rewarding accomplishments (Northup, 2023). As a leader, one of your key priorities is to help your staff achieve their personal goals and enhance their abilities. Supervisors can help employees grow by providing moral, emotional, and professional support.

Supervisors are accountable for their team's productivity by managing employee schedules, ensuring everyone meets deadlines, and distributing assignments to the proper team members. Supervisors must maintain the smooth and effective operation of their teams. One of the top management talents of a supervisor is the ability to efficiently allocate work to the proper staff. The supervisor must identify the employee's strengths and shortcomings and ensure that they are used effectively.

Physical Work Condition

A decent working environment is one that actively promotes employee safety, progress, and success. Working time (hours of labour, rest times, and work schedules), compensation, in addition to the psychological and physical requirements that are present in the workplace, are only a few of the subjects and issues included by the term working conditions (International Labour Organization, 2023). A company's general culture, growth prospects, and establishment of a suitable physical or virtual space for work to get done all contribute to a comfortable working environment. The size and arrangement of your personal workstation can have a significant impact on your job satisfaction. Consider that open floor patterns typically signal increased collaboration, and that locations with vast open communal areas typically promote innovation and the sharing of ideas.

The tools given by an office space could make or break your ability to perform a task effectively, depending on the assignment. Working conditions include things like schedules, schedules, and safety. Work culture also affects team cohesiveness. With regard to a group of individuals' behaviour management communication, the way policies are enforced, and what values are core to the organisation influences cohesiveness environment at workplace (Ariella, 2022). Even in a position with an excellent group and an atmosphere that you enjoy, there may be jobs that are risky or unhealthy or excessively lengthy shifts.

Concept of Teamwork Cohesiveness

A team is made up of two or more people who interact socially, have one or more shared goals, work together to complete tasks that are relevant to their organisation, exhibit interdependencies in terms of workflow, goals, and outcomes, have varying duties and obligations, and are all part of a larger organisational system with boundaries and connections to external contexts and task environments (Kozlowski & Bell, 2003; Kozlowski, Gull).

A work team, according to Kirkman (2000), is a collection of individuals who cooperate to accomplish a common objective and are each responsible for the execution of the other's tasks. Robbins (2000) defines a work team as a group whose collective effort yields an accomplishment that is beyond the sum of its parts.. Given the importance of groups and teams in human existence, the growing popularity of team-based organisational structures reflects the belief that collaboration may deliver results that a similar number of individuals working alone cannot. Team building, according to Gibson, Ivancevich, and Donnelly (1994), is beneficial in identifying the team's priorities and goals. It can also clarify the roles and duties of each team member.

The New Oxford Dictionary (2023) defines cohesion as "the action or fact of forming a united whole." Cohesion has been defined constructively as a dynamic process manifested in a group's tendency to keep together and remain unified in the achievement of its practical goals or the gratification of its members' emotional requirements. Cohesiveness is the voluntary feeling of oneness that ties a group together. Employees perform better as individuals when they believe they are part of a well-functioning supportive team to which they are proud to belong. They are more productive, communicative, trusting, driven, and loyal as dedicated members of the group (New Zealand Management, 2001). According to Robbins (2000), groups vary in their cohesion, or how much the individuals are drawn to one another and motivated to remain in the group.

The ideal cohesive self-supporting team environment, according to New Zealand Management (2001), is informal, friendly, and relaxed. There are frequent discussions in which everyone participates, and team members pay attention to one another. Every viewpoint is heard, everyone is fully aware of and supports the group's goals, there is constructive disagreement, the group prefers consensus over dissenter dominance, decisions are reached by consensus, and criticism is frequent, frank, and acceptable.

The group displays a united face when actions are agreed upon, specific responsibilities are assigned and freely accepted, members share beliefs and values and seek each other's support and recognition, and the leader does not dominate or have an excessive amount of deference from the group. Highly cohesive groups have very strong dynamics, both negative and positive, for group performance (Luthans, 2002). On the other side, weaker groups do not have as much influence.

Task Cohesion

Task cohesiveness refers to a group's members' shared commitment to working together to accomplish a task. Task cohesion is the ability of a team to collaborate effectively in order to complete a task or achieve a common goal (Schneider, Gruman, & Coutts, 2012). By emphasising

on some of the extrinsic reasons, such as awards, this sort of cohesion develops a goal from the team members to achieve in the sport (Schneider et al., 2012; Richardson, 2013).

This is wholly contrary to collaborating in a spirit of friends both on and off the field; rather, it makes it more crucial to win every game in order to meet the objectives specified (Smith et al., 2013). A group with a Work environment task cohesiveness is made up of individuals who are driven to work together as a team to accomplish a common goal.

Social Cohesion

Social cohesion refers to the degree to which team members get along and engage as a result (Richardson, 2013). To put it another way, the purpose here is to work as a team and create an environment where everyone gets along and converses while performing (Richardson, 2013; Murray, 2006). Social cohesiveness is effective off the pitch in addition to creating teamwork and friendship (Filho et al., 2014). Social cohesion is accomplished when people voluntarily interact and work together despite differences in behaviour, culture, and beliefs.

The key to social cohesiveness is for members of a group to get along and experience a sense of community. Consider it as the "glue" keeping everything together. It has to do with belonging, shared ideals, and trust. In truth, the majority of us believe that there is always a fine line dividing most people from other social groupings, which results in weak and fragile bonds between the constituents. Many people were prohibited from taking part in communal events due to this type of social demotion.

Empirical Review

Salas (2015) reviews the research on measuring cohesiveness and performance. In order to glean specific information about the conceptualization, measurement, and connections between cohesion and performance, empirical research was examined. The results show that the team level cohesion shows more significant relationships with performance. Team building exercises, according to Porter, Lawler, and Hackman (1975), assist team members acquire new ways of relating to one another in the organisational environment, which are likely to be helpful in boosting team effectiveness. In their team analysis, Hamilton, Nickerson, and Owan (2003) discovered that organisations use teams to boost production. The research demonstrates that when activities demand various abilities, judgement, and experience, teams outperform individuals.

Teams can quickly organise, deploy, refocus, and disband (Robbins, 1997). Team building can be helpful in terms of improved cohesion, increased job satisfaction, increased productivity, increased profit, and increased social satisfaction (Galloway, 2000). According to Fleming (2001), factors in the areas of team outcomes, team goals, and team cohesion were ranked as the most crucial to team effectiveness. Effective teams can question how a company achieves its goals (Leigh and Maynard 1995). The ultimate goal of group activities is effectiveness, which is measured using three fundamental criteria: output, member satisfaction, and capacity for sustained cooperation.

The distinction between task cohesion and social cohesion is examined by Qu, Kurokawa, and Han (2021) in order to foster the establishment of collaboration in group interactions. The results show that task cohesion is connected to a player's prior group performance, and social cohesiveness

increases a player's tolerance for defections. An unsatisfied player is more likely to look back on the past and stick with her group if she was previously satisfied when there is a higher level of task cohesion. The results demonstrate that whereas task cohesion fosters collaboration, social cohesiveness inhibits it.

Methodology

The study employed a cross sectional survey design to attain the objectives. A population of 587 employees of 25 hotels in Rivers State were covered and a sample of 234 were drawn using Krejcie Morgan 1970 table. Simple random sample technique was used. A structured questionnaire was distributed to the sample elements. The independent variable (work environment) was operationalized with supervisor's support and physical work condition. Each construct was measured with 5 items. The dependent variable (team cohesiveness) was measured with task cohesion and social cohesion. The Cronbach alpha was utilized to determine the reliability of the variable. The questionnaire items were rated on a 4-point Likert scale from 1-strongly disagreed, 2-disagree, 3-agree, and 4-strongly agreed. The Spearman rank order correlation coefficient was used in analyzing the earlier state hypotheses.

Result

234-questionnaire were distributed, but only 210(89.7%) copies were returned. The hypotheses test is undertaken at a 95% confidence interval and the decision rule is stated below.

Where $P < 0.05$ = Reject the null hypotheses

Where $P > 0.05$ = Accept the null hypotheses

Table 1: Correlations between Supervisors support and dimensions of team cohesiveness

			Supervisors Support	Task Cohesion	Social Cohesion
Spearman's rho	Supervisors support	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.822**	.839**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	210	210	210
	Task cohesion	Correlation Coefficient	.822**	1.000	.796**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	210	210	210
	Social Cohesion	Correlation Coefficient	.839**	.796**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	210	210	210

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS Output, 2023.

Supervisors Support and Task Cohesion: Column five of Table 1 above shows a rho value of 0.822** at a significance level of 0.000 which is less than the chosen alpha level of 0.05 for the hypothesis relating supervisors' support and task cohesion. Since the significance value is less than the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) which states that there is no significant relationship between supervisors' support and task cohesion is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is a strong significant positive relationship between supervisor's support and task cohesion.

Supervisors Support and Social Cohesion: Column six of Table 1 above shows a rho value of 0.839** at a significance level of 0.000 which is less than the chosen alpha level of 0.05 for the hypothesis involving supervisors' support and social cohesion. Since the significance value is less than the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between supervisors' support and social cohesion is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is a highly significant positive relationship between supervisors' support and social cohesion.

Table 2: Correlations between physical work condition and the dimension of team cohesiveness

			Physical Work Condition	Task cohesion	Social Cohesion
Spearman's rho	Physical Work Condition	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.842**	.835**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	210	210	210
	Task cohesion	Correlation Coefficient	.842**	1.000	.794**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	210	210	210
	Social Cohesion	Correlation Coefficient	.835**	.794**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	210	210	210

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS Output, 2023.

Physical Work Condition and Task Cohesion: Column five of Table 2 above shows rho value of 0.842** at a significance level of 0.000 which is less than the chosen alpha level of 0.05 for the hypothesis relating physical work condition and task cohesion. Since the significance value is less than the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{03}) which states that there is no significant relationship between physical work condition and task cohesion is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is a highly significant positive relationship between physical work conditions and task cohesion.

Physical Work Condition and Social Cohesion: Column six of Table 2 above shows a rho value of 0.835** at a significance level of 0.000 which is less than the chosen alpha level of 0.05 for the hypothesis relating to physical work condition and social cohesion. Since the significance value is less than the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{04}) which states that there is no significant relationship between physical work condition and social cohesion is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is a strong significant positive relationship between physical work conditions and social cohesion.

Discussion of Findings

The data analysis above depicts that the work environment in terms of supervisors' support and physical work condition has a connection with team cohesiveness. The discussions of each hypothesis are specified below.

Supervisors support and Task cohesion

The results of the data analysis in Table 1 showed a strong relationship between Supervisors' support and task cohesion. The P-value of 0.000 demonstrates a relationship existence between supervisors' support and task cohesion, and the rho value of 0.822 demonstrates a strong positive connection between the variables. This result is consistent with Salas (2015) whose findings show that the team level of cohesion is significantly related to organizational performance. It aligns with Penning de Vries, Knies, & Leisink (2022) that supervisor support experienced by employees at meaningful work-life events contributes to the emergence of horizontal and vertical shared perceptions.

Supervisors' support and Social cohesion

The bivariate hypothesis 2 analysis in Table 1 showed a substantial and significant correlation between supervisors' support and social cohesion. The P-value of 0.000, and the rho value of 0.839 demonstrates a strong positive link between the Supervisors' support and social cohesion. The report agrees with the findings agrees with Mohamed, & Ali (2016). that supervisors' support has a significant relationship with job satisfaction and affective commitment and can improve the employees' affective commitment. The results support those of Salas et al., (2005) that teams' cohesiveness can improve morale and give support to overworked or underqualified team members and predict the team members' effectiveness,

Physical work condition and Task cohesion

The results in Table 2 revealed that physical work condition relates significantly to task cohesion. The correlation among the variables signifies that physical work conditions can improve task cohesion. The P-value of 0.000 shows that process innovation relates to exploitation, while the rho value of 0.842 shows a Work environment positive correlational value among the variables. This result is consistent with that of Fleming (2001) that work conditions that enhance team task outcomes, goals, and team cohesion were ranked as the most crucial to team effectiveness. It also agrees with Porter et al. (1975), team members' cohesion is helpful in boosting team effectiveness and work conditions.

Physical work condition and Social Cohesion

The analysis presented in Table 2 revealed that physical work condition relates significantly to social cohesion. The P-value of 0.000 shows that physical work condition relates to social cohesion, while the rho value of 0.835 shows a high positive correlational value among the variables. This denotes that an organization with an organized physical work condition will improve its team's social cohesion. This finding agrees with Filho et al., (2014) that social cohesion influences work conditions and making people voluntarily interact and work together despite differences in behaviour, culture, and beliefs. It also aligns with Richardson (2013) that social cohesiveness is effective in teamwork and friendship.

CONCLUSION

The study examines the work environment and team cohesiveness of hotels in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study found a strong correlation between work environments and team cohesiveness of hotels in Rivers State. Given the need for, organization, proactive strategy in meeting stated goals, and collaboration among coworkers the work environment in terms of work condition and supervisor's support must be cordial for progressive team cohesiveness in a changing work environment. The study concludes that a relationship exists between work environments and team cohesiveness of the hotels in Rivers State

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The hotels in Rivers State that seek competitive advantage should deploy effective supervisor support to enhance high-performance teams' task and social cohesiveness,
2. The hotels in Rivers State promote a successful work environment that entails a cohesive and productive team.
3. The hotels in Rivers State should promote cohesiveness, through team members equal participation in team activities, good communication and free exchange of ideas,
4. The hotels in Rivers State should enhance cordial interpersonal relations among the team to overcome obstacles and promote cohesiveness

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